



DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE

July 2006



Photo: Internews

Kids' Crossroads is a weekly television program produced by and for kids from the Caucasus. The program airs in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia and has kids from all three countries on staff. The show focuses on themes that promote tolerance and understanding among youth.

GEORGIA SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1991
Capital: Tbilisi
Population: 4.5 million
Annual income per person:
\$1,040

For more information, see
<http://georgia.usaid.gov>

CURRENT SITUATION

Peaceful protests against election fraud during the Rose Revolution toppled the Shevardnadze government and ushered in the reform-minded government of Mikheil Saakashvili. USAID assistance to Georgia's non-governmental organizations, independent media, and parallel vote tabulation were instrumental in this historic event. However, the challenges of the past — working at the local level to support opposition voices — have been replaced by the overwhelmingly more complex tasks of securing lasting democratic change at both national and local levels, rekindling political pluralism, promoting national integration, and strengthening rule of law. As the leading donor in the Democracy and Governance sector, USAID is assisting the new government of Georgia to implement democratic reforms and practice good governance.



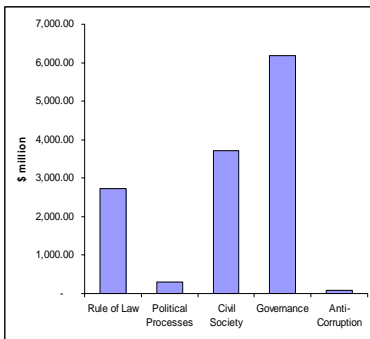
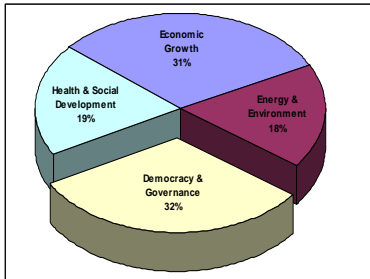
PROGRAM FOCUS

1. Promote national governance reform;
2. Foster national integration, tolerance, and respect for human rights;
3. Increase capacity of local government to respond to citizens' needs;
4. Develop political parties and reform Parliament; and
5. Strengthen the Rule of Law.



DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE CONTINUED

Percentage of FY 2006 budget spent on Democracy and Governance:



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SUCCESSES

- NGO, media, and election assistance was instrumental in laying the foundation for the Rose Revolution
- Helped institute a national bar examination for lawyers and create a national bar association
- Increased citizen awareness and involvement in public hearings by promoting the use of the Freedom of Information clause
- City managers in over 20 municipalities adopted open council meetings with agendas published in advance to increase citizen participation
- Helped draft new municipal property laws that provide for improved municipal services, increased citizen participation, and better government accountability
- Introduced new charity legislation in the tax code
- Established first independent, nationwide TV ratings system; as a result television advertising market in Georgia increased from \$3 to \$12 million since January 2004
- Created first-ever tolerance-promoting television show for youth, *Kid's Crossroads*, which is produced by, for, and about adolescents from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia